Honorable Mayor and members of city council,

My name is Greg Borom and I am the executive director of Citizens Project. Today's discussion over the proposed Qualified Adult Benefit Program has become one wrapped in controversy and contention. But it shouldn't be.

We applaud the four council members who have worked to craft a fair-minded, compromise health benefits plan that acknowledges the diversity of city employees' families. The plan offers pragmatic solutions for meeting the health insurance needs of those employees living in nontraditional households – those with an adult child, a parent, an unmarried heterosexual partner, and yes, even a homosexual partner.

This last category has become the obsession of the opposition. Rather than offer support for the city's hardworking employees or expanding health insurance coverage in our community, the opposition has worked to distract from the larger issue by falsely describing this plan as a "gay and lesbian" benefits plan at taxpayers' expense. Make no mistake; you voted that kind plan out of existence last April. We know what a same-sex domestic partner benefit plan is, and this is not that plan.

Last week, Citizens Project made available to you the full results of the poll we hired Ridder/Braden to conduct on the attitude of voters regarding domestic-partner benefits, employment nondiscrimination, and the plan you are voting on today. Among a predominately conservative sample of voters, there was significant opposition to the domestic partner benefits last April. However, the poll showed that 71% of voters support the type of plan before you today. Over half of voters that opposed the domestic partner plan said they would support the buy-in plan. Just last night, KOAA reported on a News First/Survey USA poll of 500 voters that found 68% in favor of this plan.

Clearly, Colorado Springs' voters are fair-minded when it comes to offering employee benefits that do not cost the taxpayers. But the opposition, in apparent disbelief of such a sensible, fair-minded, electorate has done its own push polling on this issue. Automated

THE PIKES PEAK HUMAN RELATIONS COALITION

MISSION STATEMENT

TO APPEAL TO THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY TO ASSIST US WITH OUR EFFORTS TO ADVANCE HARMONIOUS HUMAN RELATIONS BY PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECT AND THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE TREATMENT OF ALL PEOPLE

1. What do you feel are the most important human relations issues facing the Pikes Peak Region?

2. Please list members of our community who can assist us with our efforts to understand and work with these issues.

3. What do you think the P.P.H.R.C. should be doing to improve the way people/groups relate to each other in this community?

If you are interested in working with PPHRC, please leave your name and number below.

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calls blended controversial issues of gay marriage and gay and lesbian benefits. This was not a scientific poll, nor very accurate in its portrayal of the benefits plan. It was a poll aimed to reinforce exclusion and measure knee-jerk reactions to issues of gay and lesbian equality.

Make no mistake, CP does not advocate governance by opinion polls. No we support governance by integrity & fairness

Citizens Project is proud to be a voice in this debate for fairness. We are proud to support a plan that may result in improved health care for city employees' families. We are proud to see council members standing up to the false statements propagated by the opposition. Let's come together and stop this Focus on the Controversy, and instead Focus on the Families of City Employees – both traditional and nontraditional. Please vote yes.

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